

THE
Chap-Book
SEMI-MONTHLY

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FOR A JEST'S SAKE PERCIVAL POLLARD

THE YELLOW BOOKMAKER

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THE CHAP-BOOK

NUMBER 2

JUNE 1ST

WHO KNOWS?

THE Lily bends to mine her nun-like face,
But my wild heart is beating for the Rose.
How can I pause to heed the Lily's grace?
Shall I repent me by and bye? Who knows?

LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.



MR. PARKER'S SONNETS.*



SEQUENCE of songs, of which this collection of Mr. Parker's sonnets is an example, is more recondite and remote than most of its readers probably imagine. It would be as difficult to trace its origins as to trace springs, which, flowing from many subterranean sources, unite somewhere in one current, and force their way onward and upward until they

appear at last, and are hailed as the well-heads of famous rivers. Who will may trace its beginnings to the lays of the troubadours, which were nothing if they were not amorous: I am content to find them on Italian soil in the sonnets of Petrarch, and on English soil in the sonnets of Wyatt and Surrey.

*"A Lover's Diary. Songs in Sequence." By Gilbert Parker. Cambridge and Chicago: Stone & Kimball. MDCCCXCIV. London: Methuen & Co.

What the literatures of Greece and Rome were to men of letters the world over, once they were freed from the seclusion of the manuscripts which sheltered them so long, the literature of Italy was to English men of letters from the days of Chaucer down. They read Italian more than they read Latin and Greek: they wrote Italian, not more clumsily, let us hope, than they wrote English: and they sojourned in Italy, if they could get there, not greatly to their spiritual welfare, if the satirists of their time are to be believed. One need not be deeply read in English literature of the sixteenth century to perceive its obligations to Italian literature, to detect the influences of Boccaccio, and Bandello, and other Italian storytellers in its drama, and the influence of Italian poets in its poetry, particularly the influence of Petrarch, the sweetness, the grace, the ingenuity of whose amorous effusions captivated the facile nature of so many English singers. He was the master of Wyatt and Surrey, who, tracking their way through the snow of his footprints, introduced the sonnet form into English verse, and, so far as they might, the sonnet spirit, as they understood it. They allowed themselves, however, licenses of variation in the construction of their octaves and sextettes, which, judging from his avoidance of them, would have displeased Petrarch,—a proceeding which was followed by their immediate successors, who seldom observed the strict laws of the Petrarchian sonnet. Whether the sonnets of Wyatt and Surrey were expressions of genuine emotion, or were merely poetic exercises, is not evident in the sonnets themselves, which are formal and frigid productions. They were handed round in manuscript copies, and greatly admired in the courtly circles in which their authors moved, and ten years after the death of Surrey were collected by Master Richard Tottell, to whom belongs the honor of publishing the first miscellany of English verse. That this miscellany, the original title of which was "Songs and Sonnets written by the ryght honorable Lorde Henry Howard, late Earle of Surrey and other," was very popular is certain from the

number of editions through which it passed, and from the number of similar publications by which it was followed. It was an epoch-making book, like the "Reliques" of good Bishop Percy two centuries afterwards, and like that rare miscellany was fruitful of results in the direction of what chiefly predominated there,—the current of personal expression in amatory sonnets. The first notable scholar of Wyatt and Surrey, a scholar who surpassed his masters in every poetical quality, was Sir Philip Sidney, whose sequence of sonnets was given to the world five years after his death as "Astrophel and Stella." This was in 1591. Samuel Daniel appeared the next year with a sequence entitled "Delia," Michael Drayton a year later with a sequence entitled "Idea," and two years after that came Edmund Spenser with a sequence entitled "Amoretti." The frequency of the sonnet form in English verse was determined at this time by this cluster of poets, to which the names of Constable, Griffin and others might be added, and determined for all time by their great contemporary, whose proficiency as a sonneteer, outside of his comedies, was chiefly confined to the knowledge of "Mr. W. H." and his friends until 1609. To what extent this treasury of sonnets is read now I have no means of knowing, but it cannot, I think, be a large one, the fashion of verse has changed so much since they were written. They should be read for what they are rather than what we might wish them to be; in other words, from the Elizabethan and not the Victorian point of view. So read they seem to me "choicely good," as Walton said of their like, though I cannot say that they are much better than the strong lines that are now in fashion in this critical age. Only two of these sonnet sequences are known to have been inspired by real persons, Sidney's "Astrophel and Stella," which celebrates his enamourment of Lady Rich, and consists of one hundred and eight sonnets and eleven songs, and Spenser's "Amoretti," which celebrates his admiration for the unknown beauty whom he married during his residence in Ireland, and which

consists of eighty-eight sonnets, and an epithalamium. Of the two sequences, the Sidneyan is the more poetical, and making allowance for the artificial manner in which it is written, the more impassioned, certain of the sonnets authenticating their right to be considered genuine by virtue of their qualities as portraiture, their self-betrayal of the character of Sidney, and the vividness of their picturesque descriptions or suggestions. Such I conceive to be the twenty-seventh ("Because I oft, in dark, abstracted guise"), the thirty-first ("With how sad steps, O moon, thou climb'st the skies"), the forty-first ("Having this day my horse, my hand, my lance"), the fifty-fourth ("Because I breathe not love to every one"), the eighty-fourth ("Highway, since you my chief Parnassus be"), and the one hundred and third ("O happy Thames, that didst my Stella bear"). If Sidney had followed the advice of his Muse in the first of these sonnets,

"Fool, said my Muse to me, look in thy heart and write,"

that noble heart would surely have taught him to write in a simpler and more sincere fashion than he permitted himself to do in "*Astrophel and Stella*," which is more important for what it promised than for what it achieved.

The ease of a more practised poet than Sidney lived to be is manifest in Spenser's "*Amoretti*,"—as manifest there, I think, as in "*The Faerie Queene*," the musical cadences of whose stanzas and, to a certain extent, its rhythmical construction are translated into sonnetry; but, taken as a whole, they are as hard reading as most easy writing. They are fluent and diffuse, but devoid of felicities of expression, and the note of distinction which Sidney sometimes attains. Daniel and Drayton were reckoned excellent poets by their contemporaries, and measured by their standards, and within their limitations, they were; but their excellence did not embrace the emotion which the writing of amatory sonnets demands, nor the art of simulating it successfully, for the "*Delia*" of the one was as surely an ideal mistress as the "*Idea*" of the other.

The substance of Drayton's sonnets is more prosaic than that of Daniel's and his touch is less felicitous, is so infelicitous, in fact, that only one of the sixty-three of which the sequence is composed lingers in the memory as the expression of what may have been genuine feeling. The sonnets of Daniel are distinguished for sweetness of versification, for graces of expression, and for a vein of tender and pensive thought which was native to him. One of them (there are fifty-seven in all) which begins, "Care-charmer Sleep, son of the sable night," recalls a similar invocation to sleep in "Astrophel and Stella," and others, especially the nineteenth, which begins, "Restore thy tresses to the golden ore," remind us of some of the sonnets of Shakespeare, whose first master in sonnetry was as certainly Samuel Daniel, as in dramatic writing Christopher Marlowe.

Of the sonnets of Shakespeare, I shall say nothing here, for though they form a sequence, the sequence is not of the kind which the sonnets of Sidney and Daniel and Drayton and Spenser illustrate, and of which the purpose is to celebrate the love of a man for a woman, but of a kind which the genius of Shakespeare originated, and which deals with the friendship of a man for a man, and of which the most noteworthy example is Tennyson's "In Memoriam." I pass, therefore, from Spenser to Drummond of Hawthornden, who, in the year of Shakespeare's death, published in his second collection of verse a series of sonnets, songs, sextains and madrigals, the majority of which are of an amatory nature. Modelled after the manner of his Italian and English predecessors, and consequently academical rather than individual, they are characterized by tenderness of sentiment and a vein of melancholy reflection, by studied graces of scholarly phrasing which are not free from Scoticisms, and by a chastened remembrance of his sorrow for the loss of Mary Cunningham, the daughter of a laird, who was carried off by a fever before the arrival of their nuptial day. The line of amatory sonnet-eers ended with Drummond; but not the line of amatory

poets, the best of whom (apart from mere lyrists like Lovelace and Suckling) was William Habington, who in 1634-35 celebrated his affection for Lucia, daughter of William, Lord Powis, and the worst of whom was Abraham Cowley, who, at a later period, celebrated nobody in "The Mistress, or Several Copies of Love-Verses." There are exquisite things in "Castara," the title of which is fully justified by the spiritual purity of the love of which it is a memorial, and there are execrable things in "The Mistress," where the fancy of Cowley exhausted itself in a profusion of ingenious conceits, the brilliant absurdity of which is absolutely bewildering. Love there is none, nor any serious pretence of it, Cowley's motive in writing being that poets are scarce thought free-men of their Company, without paying some duties, and obliging themselves to be true to Love.

To follow the succession of English amatory poets later than their founders, the writers of sonnet sequences and their lyrical children, lies outside the purpose of this paper, which is simply to trace the position of Mr. Parker; so I shall say nothing of two illustrious and comparatively recent members of the guild, one being Mr. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who in "The House of Life," has preserved and Italianated the romantic traditions of Sidney and Daniel, and the other, Mrs. Elizabeth Barrett Browning, whose "Sonnets from the Portuguese" are the most impassioned utterances of love in any language, linking her name forever with the burning name of Sappho. I find in "A Lover's Diary" a quality which is not common in the verse of today, and which I find nowhere in its fulness except in the poetry of the age of Elizabeth. To describe what evades description, I should call it suggestion,—a vague hinting at rather than a distinct exposition of feeling and thought,—the prescience of things which never beheld are always expected, the remembrance of things which are only known through the shadows they leave behind them, the perception of uncommon capacities for pain, the anticipation of endless energies for pleasure, the instinc-

tive discovery and enjoyment of the secret inspirations of love. The method which Mr. Parker preserves is that of the early masters, whose sole business when they wrote sonnets was to write sonnets, not caring what they proved, or whether they proved anything, not disdaining logic, though not solicitous to obey its laws, not avid for nor averse from the use of imagery; content, in the best words they had, to free their minds of what was in them. They wrote well or ill, according to their themes and moods, but nobly, gloriously, when at their best; and to be reminded of them by a sonneteer of today, as I am by Mr. Parker, is a poetic enjoyment which is not often vouchsafed to me.

R. H. STODDARD.



IMPORTANCE.

THE Last Day is.

The Earth drops through space like a ball dropt from the hand. Flame trails after it like a red cloak outborne by the wind.

Far away in a garden on one of the planets, where their only companion is the sweet dusk, sit two lovers who think that love is eternal.

They are silent.

Suddenly the girl points towards the sky. And as she does so the loose sleeve falls back from her white arm.

"Look, love!" she cries.

"Yes," answers he; "it is a falling star."

But he is thinking of her arm.

CHARLES MINER THOMPSON.

THE PRAYER IN THE ROSE GARDEN.

LORD of this rose garden
At the end of May,
Where thy guests are bidden
To tarry for a day,

Through the sweet white falling
Of the tender rain,
With thy roses theeward
Lift this dust again.

Make the heart within me
That crumbles to obey,
Perceive and know thy secret
Desire from day to day;

Even as thy roses,
Knowing where they stand
Before the wind, thy presence,
Tremble at thy hand.

Make me, Lord, for beauty,
Only this I pray,
Like my brother roses,
Growing day by day,

Body, soul and spirit,
As thy voice may urge,
From the wondrous twilight
At the garden's verge.

Till I be as they be,
Fair, then blown away,
With a name like attar,
Remembered for a day.

BLISS CARMAN.

CONCERNING ME AND THE METROPOLIS.

IT is my wish to make a confession, an extraordinary one for an American, to wit: I am no lover of Paris. This is putting it mildly. I had never misery elsewhere of which I could not get, and hold, the upper hand. Now we were there under pleasantest conditions, at good headquarters, within reach of things I profess to love: the crowd, the studios, the concerts and cafés, the lights of the Place de la Concorde, the parks, the Louvre, the river-boats, the circuses, the old schools, the National Library. We had sweet weather; we had health, youth, leisure; we had a menu; O shade of Angry Cat! (which, you must know, is French for the best of kings, Henry of Navarre,) what a menu we did have! But over me and my hitherto unperturbed jollity there fell a deadly melancholy. My family shopped and sported, while I stood amid a thousand wheels in the Carrefour Montmartre, or in the lee of Molière's fountained house-wall, with tears bursting down these indignant and constitutionally arid cheeks. All day I wandered about alone, like a lunatic or a lover; by night I slept little, and had visions weird and gory. This lasted an entire autumn, which I count as lost out of my life, and during which I never once could lay salt on the tail of what had been myself. Something in that nervous latitude knocked out my congenital stoicism; I began to have all manner of unmanageable emotions, like an eighteenth-century heroine with the spleen or the vapors; I was more sentient, more intelligent, more humanistic, more capable of vast virtues and vices than would have seemed credible to the New England which bred me upon her sacred bean. A violent quarrelsomeness possessed me; whatever I saw and heard was an irritation; I believe I could have offered, in all soberness, to reform the Comédie Française, to unbuild the Tour de l'Horloge, and to

fight the Immortals, man by man. The bearing and gesture of the polite wee police were odious in my eyes, and the par-lous Parisian nurselings appeared insufferably like goblins. Frequently I would fall literally on the neck of that dear little bronze Faun tiptoeing at the entrance to the gardens of the Luxembourg, on the side of the Boule-Miche, scolding him fiercely for being able to live and smile and dance in fatal Paris!

It is to be desired, in general, that I were a less unspiritual creature; but there, at least, I haunted the great churches, especially Saint-Sulpice, with its solemn evensong borne on six hundred voices of seminarian men and boys. Whereas I had ever the relish of a genuine antiquarian for tombs and epitaphs, I bolted incontinently from the beaded wreaths of Père-la-Chaise, and paid with a fit of shuddering for my propinquity to historic ashes in Saint-Denis. It would confound any of my acquaintances to be told that I was a misanthrope or a royalist; yet I used to look after the ominous, noisy, big-hatted, blue-chinned, whip-cracking cabbies, and grind my teeth at them as at the whole incarnate Revolution which they instantly bring to mind. As for the Louvre, it gave me no comfort; I crossed its threshold but twice, for it tore me in pieces with the unbearable glory on its walls.

In fine, Paris had about driven me mad. While I strolled the Quarter, I had for company, step for step, now Abelard, now Jacques de Molau and his Templars, now the Maid, now Coligny or Guise, now the Girondists and André Chénier: the long procession of the wronging and the wronged, the disillusioned, the slain, which belongs to those altered and brightened streets. Strange theories inhabited me; I was no crass optimist any more. My head hummed with the tragic warning of Bossuet that at the bottom of every knowable thing was nothingness. And all this with a bun in one fist, and in the other a gem of a duodecimo, bought at the quays for three sous; with a cloudless sky above and every incentive, including poverty, towards fullest content and exhilaration.

In London I had been happy, and "clad in complete steel" against such alien moods as these. And to London,



eventually, I had to go back, although M. S., who lives for art and Chicago, and who always knows what's what, compared me to a spook with no stomach for Paradise, whimpering for Hades and the sooty company thereof. But in London I was calm, normal, free, as by some eternal paradox.

One door in Paris I regretted to leave, for I went almost daily, like Little Billee and his cheerful colleagues, to the Morgue. I should have become a great novelist, had I taken my chances there a bit longer! Next to the Morgue, I was loathe to part with the bridges, over which goes so much laughing and shining life, under which so much mystery is forever being fished up by aid of the torch and the prong. Ah, those men and women, stung, from the beginning, by the scorpions in that smooth, clean, treacherous air, and asking of the Seine water that it should quench immaterial fires!

So long as I have an eye to my own longevity and peace, I shall never put foot in Paris. Moreover, the place is painful, as having shaken to the base my smug opinion of myself. It taught me my moral ticklishness, and shrunk me into less than a cosmopolite; though I make puns again, I do so humbly, and out of a psychic experience. Nor must the item go unrecorded that I had a French ancestor, an unimportant personage remembered not then so much as since. He was born on the borders of Provence; what Paris was to him, or whether he ever beheld it, I know not. It is possible that he may have burnt his fingers there, and that his bullying spirit imposed upon mine this fantastic attraction of repulsion, this irrational hatred of what I knew all the time to be the most animated, the most consistent, and the most beautiful city in the world.



FOR A JEST'S SAKE.

THERE was something of a hiss in the air the night-wind was whistling as it passed over the housetops. Pierrot, listening, shuddered and closed his eyes.

"Like a sword," he whispered to himself, "like a sword!" He leaned his chin upon his elbows and looked over toward the east. "Tomorrow," he sighed, "after tomorrow there may not be for me — another tomorrow."

He turned from the window and threw himself upon a couch by the wall. He placed his ear against the wall; mere paper partition that it was, he could hear distinctly the slightest noise in the adjoining attic. He crossed his arms over his chest, for greater warmth's sake. Presently he was muttering, half asleep, half awake. The wind shook the little attics as if they were doves on a pole. From the next room came the sound of someone humming, "*Robert, toi que j'aime.*"

"Ah," Pierrot was muttering, "how I love her! She is there, my pretty Pierrette, just beyond the partition, with her gentle eyes and her cruel little mouth that will not accept my kisses. Why is she so vain, this dear Pierrette? Why am I not enough for her, I who can do nothing but love her? But no! Foolish one, hyper-romantic girl! She declares it would be altogether too tame to surrender without a struggle; to give me a victory without a battle. Ah! Pierrette, I, who want nothing better than to kiss you, I am to cross swords for you, because you are so vain, you little lily you! Ah, misery, what shall I do! She has found a rival for me; she has made me promise to fight him. For what? For her; for her vanity! Who wins may have her! Oh, this pride, this foolish romance, this absurd vainglory!"

From the east a pale streak of grey spun out along the horizon. Pierrot shivered again. "Today," he said, "is the day of the duel. With whom? I do not know. For what? For Pierrette. That is all."

In the adjoining attic all was still. As the grey dawn stole over the ramparts of night, Pierrot, still leaning his head against the thin partition, fell asleep.

WHEN he awoke, the sun was high in the heavens. With a startled cry Pierrot shook himself, threw his white cloak all around his shoulders, and hid his bright sword in one of the folds. Then he passed out.

"The balcony of St. Peter's, at noon," he repeated to himself, as he strode over the housetops. A white cat bounded across his path. "Ah, thou cat," cried Pierrot, "wish me luck! I am going to a duel." But the cat sprang swiftly down a chimney. "My rival wears a black mask, so Pierrette told me," Pierrot went on; "will it be a death-mask for him or for me, I wonder." He drew the cloak more closely about his shoulders.

Along the balcony of St. Peter's paced a figure also enveloped in a white cloak, wearing a black mask.

Silently the black mask bowed. Silently the two crossed swords.

No one else; only Pierrot and the black mask. The sparrows twittered curiously. The church bells tolled out the noon hour.

Crash! The swords came together with a coruscating gleam.

Pierrot, knowing his lack of skill with the sword, prayed to God to help him. "Help me," he begged, from between his teeth, while he parried blows and made thrusts, "help me to win Pierrette. Because—I love her!"

The black mask was pressing Pierrot close. As when a blacksmith is forging horse-shoes, so the sparks flew from the meeting blades. The black mask pressed on, eagerly, never seizing many chances to wound, seeming only anxious to disarm. Pierrot receded, praying ever for help.

They were close to the parapet, still crashing blades fiercely together.

A fierce lunge from Pierrot. Then a yet fiercer attack by the black mask; Pierrot stepped back, back—his heel slipped; he felt himself going; with a cry of "Pierrette! for you—I love"—with his right hand, holding the sword, high in air, he fell backwards,—backwards and downwards. As he fell, his sword caught the gleam of the noonday sun. And, like a gleam of sunshine before night comes, there came to him, ere the awful rush into space stunned him, the voice of Pierrette.

She stood there over him, aghast! It had all been a joke, a pretty trial of courage. She stood there, clutching her sword convulsively, leaning far over the parapet. Then she tore the black mask from her face, and crying out, despairingly, "Pierrot! I come!" she flung herself over the parapet.

PERCIVAL POLLARD.

THE YELLOW BOOKMAKER.

THERE once was a certain A. B.
And a Yellow Bookmaker was he.
His dead black and white
Was such a delight,
All Vigo street came out to see.

He drew the bold, bad Salomee,
The Biblical daughter of glee,
With ludicrous smile
As she danced to beguile
Poor Herod, the king of Judee.

In a manner remarkably free,
With her dancing skirt up to her knee,
She astonished the King
With a marvellous thing,
Half modern, half ancient Chaldee.

It is all very well in Judee
For a hypnotized, doting grandee
To order a dance
And pay in advance
With a holy man's head for a fee;

But the monarch was simple, you see,
And wily was young Salomee,
By her mother well-schooled;
So the monarch was fooled,
And the saint was dished up to the three.

Yes, Herod was "pinched" to agree
To a very unrighteous decree.
What a lesson to men
Is the good prophet, then,
Done up by an impudent she!

Circassian, Hindoo, Japanee,
The Mannikin Maids of Goree,
The ruinous blonde,
The icily fond
Dark duchess without pedigree,—

There are beauties in every countree;
But if such a looking mousmee
Had come here and plead
For Iokanaan's head,
She wouldn't have got it from me.

So the whimsical, impish Aubrey
Must have laughed in his sleeve, Te-he-he,
To play such a game
When Oscar the Tame
Was Tetrarch of Piccadilly.

And everyone whispered, "Dear me,
How very extraordinary!"
And poor Mrs. Grundy
Was buried on Sunday,
Oscarified such things could be.

Now this is the tale of A. B.
The grotesque black and white devotee,
The décadent fakir,
The Yellow Bookmaker,
The funny-man over the sea.

P. S. If you're anxious to see
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Cornhill, in the Hub, dollars three —
And seventy
five
cents.

THE CHAP-BOOK
SEMI-MONTHLY

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THE next number of the Chap-Book will contain a review of BLISS CARMAN'S "Low Tide on Grand Pré," by CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

THOMAS GORDON HAKE.

DR. HAKE is one of the most earnest and original of poets.

He has taken nothing from his contemporaries, but has imagined a message for himself, and has chosen to deliver it in terms that are wholly his own. For him the accidents and trivialities of individualism, the transitory and changing facts that make up the external aspect of an age or a character, can hardly be said to exist. He only concerns himself with absolutes — the eternal elements of human life and the immutable tides of human destiny. It is of these that the stuff of his message is compacted; it is from these that its essence is distilled. His talk is not of Arthur and Guinevere, nor Chastelard and Atalanta, nor Paracelsus and Luria and Abt Vogler; of "the drawing-room and the deanery" he has nothing to say; nothing of the tendencies of Strauss and Renan, nothing of the New Renaissance, nothing of Botticelli, nor the ballet, nor the text of Shakespeare, nor the joys of the book-hunter, nor the quaintness of Queen Anne, nor the morals of Helen of Troy. To these he prefers the mystery of death, the significance of life, the quality of human and divine love; the hopes and fears and the joys and sorrows that are the perdurable stuff of existence, the inexhaustible and unchanging principles of activity in man. . . . His (Dr. Hake's) imagination is at once quaint and far-reaching — at once peculiar and ambitious. . . .

Last of all, in an epoch trained upon the passionate and subtle cadences of the Laureate and the large-moulded, ample, irresistible melodies of Mr. Swinburne, Dr. Hake chooses to deal in rhythms of the utmost naïveté and in metrical forms that are simplicity itself.

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY in *Views and Reviews*.

The Poems of Thomas Gordon Hake: selected by Alice Meynell, with a portrait by Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Stone & Kimball. \$1.50.

The Chap-Book



The Boston Transcript:

Maria Louise Pool, who is well known through her stories, has contributed a charming sketch in "Me'n Maje." The notes are mostly upon Aubrey Beardsley, and are as delightful to one who knows the work of this curious person as the portrait of him "After Himself."

The CHAP-BOOK deserves great praise. It is apparently aiming to be a little Jack-the-Giant-Killer in literature. If we remember rightly, that hero did brave work, and we hope that the CHAP-BOOK will be no less aggressive and successful.

The New York World:

— An exceedingly pretty little pamphlet with contributions by some well-known writers, and containing among the other attractions of its first issue a portrait of Aubrey Beardsley "After Himself."

The Boston Journal:

This little book is entertaining. There is the enthusiasm of youth tempered agreeably with disdain for the commonplace. There is the feeling of delight in color, perfume and rhythm. There is left in the mouth of a reader a pungent, fragrant, exhilarating taste, although the tongue may have been pricked for a moment.

The Boston Times:

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The New York Tribune:

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